

REMARKS

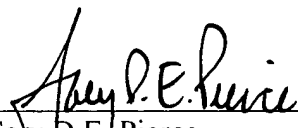
In the Office Action mailed July 10, 2000, the Examiner took the position that the application is presently directed to two distinct inventions (*e.g.*, Group I -- apparatus claims 1-18) and Group II (method claims 19-43). Accordingly, the Examiner requested that Applicant elect one of these two inventions to be examined in this application, with the option of seeking protection for the second invention by filing a separate application.

By this paper, Applicant hereby provisionally elects, without traverse, the apparatus of Group I (*e.g.*, claims 1-18). It is submitted, therefore, that Applicant has fully responded to the Examiner's Action and made the required election.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-18 are in condition for immediate allowance. In the event the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to the prompt allowance of any of these claims which could be clarified in a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully urged to initiate the same with the undersigned.

DATED this 31 day of July, 2000.

Respectfully submitted,



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